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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BULLETIN

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Notes.

At a special meeting of the Trustees of the Museum held January 12, the Building Committee presented a unanimous report accompanied by sketches in plan, elevation, and perspective, and containing recommendations of a course of procedure for the erection of the new building. The report was acted upon at the Annual Meeting held January 18, when the following vote was passed:

"Voted, That the Building Committee reduced to five shall have authority to proceed to obtain plans in general accordance with their recommendations, together with specifications and bids for such a building as the Committee think should immediately be erected."

During the month of November the experiments in the lighting of exhibition galleries, which have been carried on for the past two years in a building erected for the purpose on the site of the new Museum, were brought to a close and the building removed. The inquiry was instituted by the Building Committee of the Trustees, and has been shared in by many others connected with the Museum or interested in its welfare. The investigation has been fruitful of results, and a statement of these, with an account of the building and the various tests carried on within it, forms the matter of a report which has just been presented to the Trustees by Mr. W. R. McCornack, S. B. (M. I. T.), upon whom since the first few months the active conduct of the experiments has devolved. The questions principally treated, those of the character and direction of the illumination which is most favorable for different classes of exhibits, are less familiar in the literature of the subject, which has most to do with the quantity of light admitted.

Since January 1 the Library has received four important donations: from J. Pierpont Morgan, New York, catalogue of a collection of books formed by James Toovey, the property of J. Pierpont Morgan (N. Y., 1901), containing numerous excellent reproductions of book covers; from Mrs. John L. Gardner, Boston, *Le Cornici Italiane*, by M. Griggenheim, Milano (Hoepli, 1897), containing 100 plates representing 120 frames; from Miss Ellen M. Shumway, Boston,

Les Cartes à Jouer du XIV^e au XX^e Siècle, by Henry-René d'Allemagne (Paris, 1906, 2 vols.), giving an elaborate illustrated history of playing cards; from the estate of Heber R. Bishop, the sumptuous work, *Investigations and Studies in Jade* (N. Y., 1906, 2 vols.), giving an exhaustive technical and artistic account of jade, illustrated in the most lavish manner.

Mr. Paul Chalfin, who on September 15 last was relieved at his own request of the charge of the Chinese and Japanese Department of this Museum, to enter the competition for the Jacob H. Lazarus Scholarship for the study of mural painting, was awarded the scholarship on December 2. Mr. Chalfin sailed for Italy during the month, and in accordance with the terms of the scholarship will spend three years at Rome.

Mr. A. M. Lythgoe, Curator of Egyptian Art, is now in Egypt, engaged in explorations in association with Dr. G. A. Reisner, the former head of the Hearst Expedition, and in the joint interest of Harvard University and this Museum. Any works of art obtained by the expedition are to become the property of the Museum, the University assuming the publication of its results.

The Museum was visited by 36,719 persons during the months of November and December, or 4,022 less than in the corresponding period of last year, when the number was 40,741. The attendance on Sundays in November and December was 16,540, as against 14,235 in 1904.

During the year just past the Museum was visited by 249,239 persons, which number includes 176,533 for Saturdays, Sundays and the four public holidays when the Museum was open free. The paid admissions were 19,535. The average number of visitors to the Museum on Sundays was 2,175. The figures of the preceding year were: total, 248,235; Saturdays and Sundays, 173,188; and 21,119 paid admissions. The average number of Sunday visitors was 2,239.

Free tickets of admission were issued to 834 teachers in public schools, admitting them to the Museum with their pupils on all days in the course of the year: 2,307 annual tickets were

issued to instructors and students in colleges and schools, 292 to artists, 665 to special students, 73 to classes of a large number of pupils, and 686 transferable tickets were issued to teachers to be used by their pupils in rotation. The opportunity to benefit by the facilities given by the Museum was offered specially to all the public schools in Boston and Greater Boston.

The current expenses for the year were \$77,156.35, as against \$82,034.86 for 1904. The total contributions received from annual subscribers toward defraying this total amounted to \$14,280, as compared with \$13,355 in 1904. It will be seen that the expenses were \$4,878.51 less than last year and the contributions \$925 more.

Report

Of the Special Committee appointed August 28 to consider the resignation of Dr. Edward Robinson.

To the Trustees of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts:

At a meeting of the Trustees held on August 28 the following vote was adopted:

"Voted, That the consideration of the subject referred to in the call for this meeting be postponed and that a committee of five be appointed with the power to fill vacancies in their number, said committee to consist of Messrs. C. E. Norton, C. W. Eliot, J. C. Gray, C. S. Sargent, and William Endicott.

"Said committee shall invite Mr. Robinson to meet them for the purpose of considering his letter to the President of the Museum resigning his position as Director. And this committee is further requested to consider and report on the duties and relations of the various officers, members of the staff, and committees of the Museum; and shall have the right to call upon any other gentlemen connected with the Museum whom they shall wish to consult upon the matters referred to in this resolution.

"Said committee is to report to the Trustees at a future meeting to be called by the President when requested by this committee to do so."

The subject referred to in the call for this meeting was the resignation of the Director of the Museum. This resignation was contained in the following letter. A copy of this letter was sent to each member of the Board of Trustees and appeared in the *Boston Transcript* of the 22d of August.

MANCHESTER, MASS., August 12, 1905.
SAMUEL D. WARREN, ESQ.,

President of the Museum of Fine Arts.

Dear Sir:—Herewith I beg to hand to the Trustees of the Museum my resignation as Director and Curator of Classical Antiquities. My reason for resigning is that I am not in sympathy with the policy of administration of the Museum, especially in matters affecting the position of the Director but not within his control, and as a result I have come unwillingly to the conviction that I can no longer occupy the post either with advantage to the interests of the Museum or with satisfaction to myself.

I wish to assure you that my determination has been

reached with great regret and after many weeks of deliberation. It is, however, final, and I therefore request that I may be relieved of my duties at as early a date, during the coming autumn, as may suit the convenience of the Trustees.

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) EDWARD ROBINSON.

I am sending a copy of this note to each of the Trustees.

With this preliminary statement your committee now beg leave to report as follows:

After inviting the Director to meet them and receiving from him a statement of the reasons which had led to his resignation, they determined to invite other officers of the Museum, as well as members of its committees, to give information regarding its affairs. At a series of long meetings, beside hearing the Director, they have heard the President, the Secretary, the Assistant Director, the Librarian, the Keeper of Japanese Pottery, the Superintendent of the Buildings, the Director of the School of Design, past and present members of the Executive Committee and of the Museum Committee, and they received from the Curator of Egyptian Art a written statement prepared before his departure for Egypt, which took place previously to the first meeting of this committee. Individual members of this committee have further had interviews with or received letters from one or more of the Trustees which have contributed to its information.

The evidence received by the committee confirmed the inference to be drawn from the Director's letter of resignation, that divided counsels had existed for a considerable time in the administration of the Museum; and it became evident early in the investigation that the limits of the authority of the Museum Committee and of the Director and the Assistant Director were so ill-defined as to deprive the Director of the independence and the authority without which no Director could hope to discharge the functions of his office satisfactorily to himself. It further became apparent that this condition had created strained relations among the officers of the Museum and confusion in the minds of subordinates. In seeking for the origin of this evil condition, your committee came to the conclusion that it was largely to be found in the character of the By-Laws. Had the By-Laws defining the functions of the Committee on the Museum and of the Director been intended to bring about a conflict of authority, their first clauses could hardly have been more effectively framed. The By-Law relating to the Director states that the Director "shall, under the Trustees, have the general charge and management of the Museum," while that relating to the Committee on the Museum states that "the Committee on the Museum shall have supervision and control of all the collections belonging to the Museum and of the arrangement and exhibition thereof."

Your committee hoped that by radical changes in the By-Laws and by other measures which they were prepared to recommend, Mr. Robinson might be induced to withdraw his resignation, but in this hope they have been disappointed. Your committee, therefore, with great regret are compelled to advise that his resignation be accepted.